

County Planning Meetings - SAFETEA-LU Transit Planning Requirement

According to the transportation reauthorization act (SAFETEA-LU), to receive program funding in FFY 2007, Federal Program grantees (New Freedom, Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC), and the Elderly and Disabled Transit Programs (5310)) have to certify that approved projects were derived from a "locally developed coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan", and the plan was developed through a process that includes representatives of public, private, and nonprofit transportation and human services providers and participation by the public. Given the short turn-around to do the plans, WisDOT developed this process so projects can continue to receive funding for 2007.

Since every county will submit a plan with a list of approved projects for 5310 and JARC, WisDOT is offering the counties an opportunity to attend a one-day meeting coordinated and facilitated by RPC/MPO/county planners to develop the plan. Since FTA guidance for New Freedom has not been released, WisDOT will work with counties to amend their plans/approved project list once guidance is received. Part of the plan will include a county assessment of human service transportation coordination with an action plan for developing strategies and steps for moving forward with coordination efforts.

Overview of Process

RPC/MPO/County planners will coordinate and conduct a one-day meeting in each county to develop the "locally developed coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan". RPC planners were selected to conduct the county meetings because planners review federal and state program applications; planners need to be aware and knowledgeable of transit programs and funding streams in each county; and RPC's are not stakeholders at the county meeting so should be viewed as an independent and objective entity. In those counties that are not affiliated with an RPC, the MPO planner or county planners have been requested to coordinate and conduct the county meeting. Below are steps and requirements in the process.

- WisDOT put together a day of training (2/6/06) to instruct the RPC/MPO/County planners on how to use the Framework For Action: Building the Fully Coordinated Transportation System tool developed through the United We Ride initiative, and the process to obtain a list of approved projects.
- Between 4/1/06-9/30/06, RPC/MPO/County planners will coordinate and facilitate the county meetings.
- Invitations to the County meetings will include the range of required categories required by SAFETEA-LU (representatives of public, private, and nonprofit transportation and human services providers and participation by the public). WisDOT will provide the planners with lists of participants to invite in these categories. RPC/MPO planners can work with their county planners, County Family Service or Aging Agencies, Transportation Coordination Councils, etc. to invite participants to the meeting.
- WisDOT will provide a comprehensive tool kit to the planners of the county meetings to include worksheets, forms, and samples of completed forms and plans.
- At each county meeting the planners will have a list of approved projects for 5310 and JARC and will obtain approval from the participants for continued funding of these projects in 2007. New projects can be added to the project list for funding in 2007. WisDOT will provide the planners with this list of approved projects for each county.

- The planners will facilitate the tool, Framework For Action: Building the Fully Coordinated Transportation System, and record on flip charts the priorities and action plan to further public and human service transportation coordination in the County.
- The planners will transcribe the above information into a written action plan (template and samples will be provided by WisDOT).